



LOVE THAMIZH

Love Thamizh is a multilingual online journal with articles in English about the language history and culture of Tamilnadu and translations from Tamil and to Tamil

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1. A review on “Classical Tamil Songs of the Poetess Avvai”

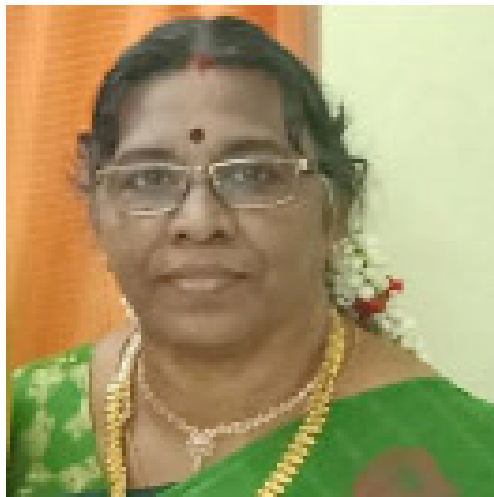
Marcie Bower

Valatie, New York, USA



It is an honor to be asked to give my thoughts and impressions on this stellar collection of poems by one of the oldest known poetesses of Tamil literature. The Poetess Avvai lived and wrote in the Sangam period in what is now Tamil Nadu, now understood to have lived between 300 BCE and 300 AD. She is believed to have been a court poet for some of the rulers of Tamil Nadu at that time, and was a prolific poetess and writer.

Here, C. Rajeswari has catalogued Avvai’s songs for English readers. It is an invitation for English speakers to delight in these ancient texts – to try to imagine the time and place from which Avvai is writing: to smell the palmyra flowers, hear the jingle of bells on women’s anklets, see the brilliant colors of peacock feathers and flower garlands; but also the smell and see the smoke of funeral pyres, picture the realities of war and death. More than that, it is an invitation to connect to some of the themes of these works that perhaps transcend space and time, particularly those a female poetess can uniquely speak to – the grief of a mother losing a son, the pain of gossip and rumor among



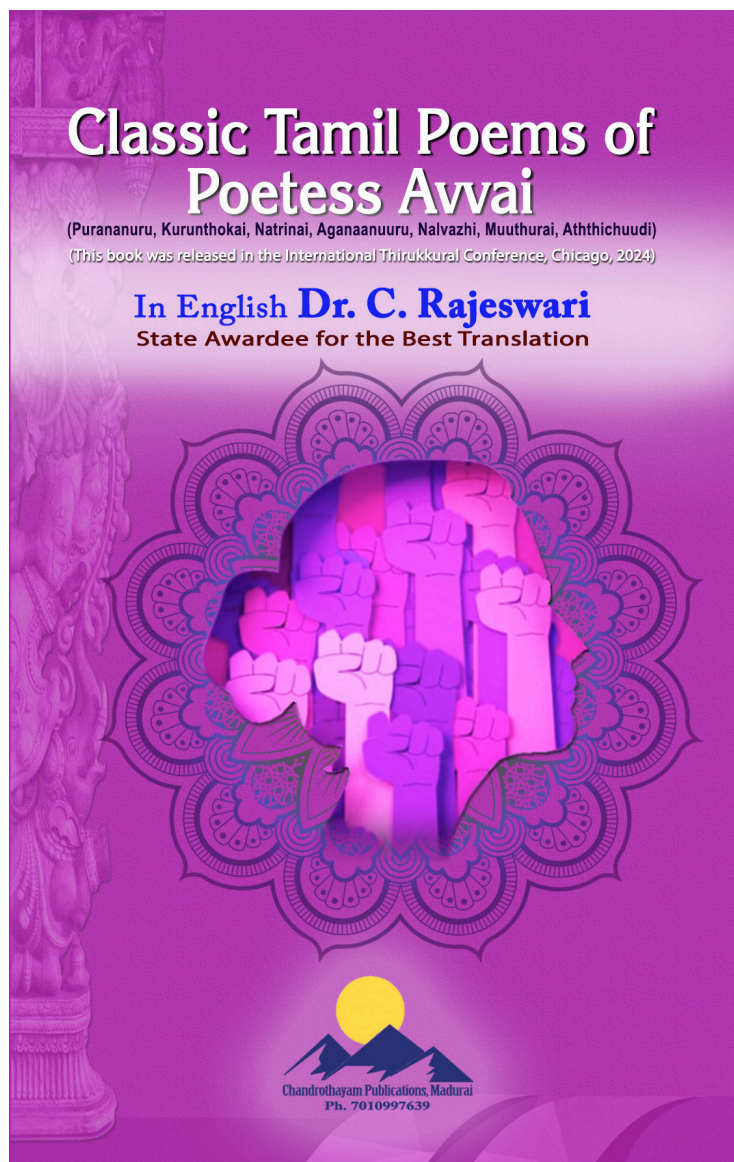
Dr. C. Rajeswari

Translator, Writer, Publisher,
State Awardee for Translation

other women, the internal turmoil and struggle of how to deal with infidelity or broken promises.

The first section of this collection lays out Avvai's poems from the Pura-naanuuru, the 8th of the Eight Anthologies in Sangam literature. The Pura-naanuuru consists of puram categories of poems – those pertaining to war, politics, and public life of the time. In the case of Avvai, many of these songs tell of and praise King Adhiyamaan.

As an outsider to Tamil language and culture (but as a former student of Tamil and resident of Tamil Nadu), I was struck by the way Avvai successfully paints the mental picture of the setting for these poems – she speaks of broken bangles, local herbs, flower garlands, elephants, anklets, the kapok tree, and bullocks – images that transport me to modern day Tamil Nadu as much as an ancient world.



I also appreciated this ancient poetess for the fact that she heaps praise on her kings not just for their valor or bravery, but also for their generosity, charity, and kindness.

As much of these songs deal with the preparations for and the Tamil phases of war, they are not always pretty. They deal with the realities of war, but draped under the cloak of valor and bravery. As a mother myself, one song in particular really stuck with me – Puranaanuuru 295:

*Feeling proud of this brave son
Dried breasts secreted and dripped
For the mother of this young warrior
Who never showed his back to his enemy*

I think this passage in particular speaks to the delicate balance of pride and grief of the mother in that moment.

The next part of C. Rajeswari's collection of Avvai's songs chronicles the poetess' contributions to the Kurunthokai – the second of the Eight Anthologies in Sangam literature, which deals with the theme of akam or love.

Here I was struck by how some of the writings seemed so mundane and commonplace – a conversation with a friend here, gossip from the town prostitute there. But I also think many of the songs speak to the pain or anguish that women experience in patriarchal societies when they are dealing with an unfaithful husband or a lover who is not upholding his promises. Kurunthokai 91 particularly illustrates this internal struggle, as the writer herself can't decide whether to punish her husband for his transgressions or not.

C. Rajeswari goes on to share Avvai's contributions to the Natrinai, the first of the Eight Anthologies of Sangam literature that deals with both love (akam) and war/politics/public life (puram) categories of poems. Next comes Avvai's songs from the Aganaanuuru, another of the Eight Anthologies of Sangam Literature.

This collection also includes poems from Avvai's works Nalvazhi, Muuthurai, Aththichuudi, and Kondrai Venthan, all focused on morality and advice for a good life, such as developing good habits, maintaining discipline, and doing good deeds.

As a 21st-century American woman, I have to say that there are some lines from these moral advice sections that I took issue with – Avvai tells women not to boast about their knowledge (Kondrai Venthan 66), for instance, and references that a good wife is invaluable but if she "talks back" the house



Poetess Avvai

will become “a tiger’s lair.” (Muuthurai 21). However, when I think more about it, these were probably very helpful and sage pieces of advice of how a woman could best succeed and flourish at the time she was writing and should not detract from all that Avvai accomplished as a female poet.

The fact that the poetess Avvai gave voice to the female experience two thousand years ago, and that voice was deemed important enough to be written down and included in so many prominent Sangam literature texts is impressive. I believe she does justice to that female voice – expressing admiration, frustration, exaltation, grief, love, struggle, generosity, jealousy, support for her homeland, the power of friendship and communication; and then offers her own take on how to be good in this world.

I would be remiss not to mention the incredible translation work of C. Rajeswari in this collection. Any Tamil to English translation is difficult – translating two thousand year old Tamil is even more challenging, and translating poetry is a near impossible task. She has done so brilliantly and as such is able to share these pivotal early Tamil female writings with a Western audience, which is a true gift.

November 26, 2023

Former Tamil Student in Madurai, Tamil Nadu
Current Acupuncturist and Herbalist, NY, USA

2. "Tamil is not just a language; it's a culture..."

(Gene Notes in Vengai Anchor - A Review)

Sajeni (Vijeni)

B.E, MBA, MA

Dubai



"Tamil is not just a language; it's a culture, a tradition, a way of life. It's the soul of a vibrant community."

"Gene Notes in Vengai Anchor" by Tamilmagan and translated by Dr. C. Rajeswari is a mesmerizing journey into a world where past and future dance in perfect harmony. From the moment readers step into the shoes of Dev (protagonist), they are taken into a roller coaster ride of historical facts, ancient prophecies, and intriguing themes.

In this meticulously researched and passionately written novel, readers embark on a cultural journey that transcends geographical borders and spans centuries. The novel is not just informative; it's a celebration of the richness of Tamil culture, language, and heritage. The beauty of the Tamil language is not merely discussed; it is interwoven into the narrative, making it interesting until the last page.

The novel introduces us to a seemingly ordinary protagonist, but as the story unfolds, layers are peeled away, revealing a complex personality. Dev's transformation is not abrupt; it's a gradual evolution shaped by the characters that inhabit his dreams. The author presents a diverse array of personalities, each





Tamilmagan

with their own motivations and flaws. The interactions between characters are reliable, adding a sense of realism that grounds the narrative.

The narrative unfolds with each chapter revealing layers of Tamil history and origin. The author skilfully guides readers through the corridors of time, from the Sangam era to the future, connecting the dots between facts and fiction. The author artfully navigates the narrative, introducing unexpected turns that keep readers on the edge of their seats. The twists are not mere plot devices; they are integral to the historical facts creating a dynamic and engaging reading experience.

Though the author's regional colloquialisms, cultural references, and historical fictional stories enhance the authenticity of the storytelling; however, at times, these elements may be less accessible to readers who are not familiar with the specific cultural nuances. Also, the frequent change of timelines might complicate the reading experience. It would have been better if the timelines had flowed coherently for better grasping of the events.

In conclusion, "Gene Notes in Vengai Anchor" is not just a book; it's an immersive experience, a tribute to the language Tamil that has withstood the sands of time. The author's passion for Tamil heritage is contagious, and his ability to convey the intricacies of this rich culture makes the book both enlightening and enchanting. Highly recommended for anyone eager to embark on a literary pilgrimage into the heart of Tamil identity.

3. Indian diaspora in Riyadh

Mrs. Vijyalakshmi Masilamani.
Riyadh



The Indian diaspora refers to the global community of people of Indian origin who have settled in various countries around the world. This diaspora is one of the largest and most diverse in the world, with individuals and families who have emigrated from India for various reasons, including economic opportunities, education, and cultural exchange. The Indian diaspora has made significant contributions to the countries they have settled in, and they often maintain strong ties to their Indian heritage and culture.

Indeed, the Tamil diaspora plays a significant role in preserving and promoting Tamil language and culture wherever they go. Here are some ways in which they contribute:

1. ***Language Preservation:*** Tamil expatriates often maintain the use of the Tamil language in their homes and communities, helping to preserve it for future generations. They may establish Tamil language schools and cultural centers to teach the language and its rich literary traditions.
2. ***Cultural Celebrations:*** The Tamil diaspora celebrates Tamil cultural events and festivals, such as Pongal, Tamil New Year, and Diwali, in their host countries. These celebrations help raise awareness of Tamil culture and traditions.
3. ***Arts and Music:*** Tamil artists, musicians, and dancers in the diaspora often promote traditional Tamil arts. They perform classical music and dance forms, exhibit Tamil art, and participate in cultural events, sharing the beauty of Tamil culture with others.
4. ***Cuisine:*** Tamil restaurants and food outlets run by the diaspora offer authentic Tamil cuisine, introducing the flavors and culinary traditions of Tamil Nadu to a global audience.

5. **Literature and Media:** Tamil authors and journalists within the diaspora contribute to the promotion of Tamil literature and media. They may write books, articles, and produce content in Tamil or about Tamil culture.
6. **Community Organizations:** Tamil diaspora communities establish cultural and social organizations that organize cultural events, seminars, and exhibitions to raise awareness about Tamil culture and heritage.
7. **Education:** Tamil expatriates often support the teaching of Tamil language and culture in schools and universities abroad. They may also sponsor scholarships and cultural exchange programs.
8. **Advocacy:** Some members of the Tamil diaspora engage in advocacy and awareness campaigns to highlight Tamil culture and human rights issues in Tamil-speaking regions.

The Tamil diaspora's contributions go beyond language and culture; they play a vital role in fostering a sense of Tamil identity and maintaining connections with their homeland while enriching the cultural diversity of their host countries.

Note : As a Diaspora , I lived in Riyadh , the capital of Saudi Arabia for more than two decades. I know how hard to live there as diasp.

Now, The young king Salman made the life of expatriates very smooth and comfortable. Hats off to The custodian of Holy Masques Salman !

Now , the Indian Diaspora live happily in Saudi Arabia.

I had submitted a Research paper on The struggle and life of Expatriates in Saudi Arabia in the first international conference on Tamil Diaspora , held in Mauritius.

Those days were entirely different from the present.

Indian diaspora particularly the Tamil diaspora gained a good name by their sincere hard work . So, every where Indian diaspora are respected.



My India

My Pride

1. India, is my pride

*Difficult to describe in few, words, I am afraid
Yet will try to take you a short ride
Around the proud moments enjoying by my side*

*We struggled to gain independence
To see our nation come out with great emergence
Having people with great heart in abundance
Challenging the world with great confidence*

*While the entire world is healing
A star is slowing rising
To regain its lost glory
And start a new story
Let our Mother nation star keep shining
For which we are all waiting (Abitha Srinivasan)*

2. கொரியப் பாடலின் மொழிபெயர்ப்பு

கேப்குன் மற்றும் கேப்டோல்

கேப்டோலும் கேப்குனும் ஒரே கிராமத்தில் வசித்தனர்
ஒருவரையொருவர் காதலிப்பதாய்க் கூறினர்
ஆனால் தங்களுக்கு இதயம் மட்டுமே உள்ளது என்றார்கள்
வெளியில் தெரியாதது போல் நடித்தார்கள்
ஓ! தெரியாதது போல் நடித்தார்கள்.

பின்னர், கேப்குன் விரைவில் திருமணம் செய்து கொண்டாள்.
கல்யாணம் ஆன முதல் நாள் இரவே ஓயாமல் அழுதாள்.
அவள் நினைப்பதெல்லாம் அவனைப் பற்றித்தான் என்றாள்.
வெளியில், அவள் இல்லாதது போல் பாசாங்கு செய்தாள்.
ஓ, அவள் இல்லாதது போல் பாசாங்கு செய்தாள்.

இதனால் மனமுடைந்த அவன் திருமணம் செய்து கொள்ள சென்றான்.
திருமணம் ஆன முதல் நாள் இரவே நிலாவைப் பார்த்து அழுதான்.
அவனது இதயம் குழந்தையைப் போன்றது என்று கூறினான்.
வெளியில், அவன் நிறைய பணிகளைச் செய்தான் என்று கூறினான்.
ஓ! ஏதோ செய்யப் போகிறேன் என்றான்.

பவள சங்கர

3. నీతోనాసంభాషణ – unnodu uraiyadudhal

1. నీతోనాసంభాషణ

రెండుమూడు

స్వరాలూ

పలికి

ఒకయుగంధాటి

వెళ్ళేవాడిని

ఒకస్వరాన్ని కూడా

దాటలేనినేను

పాడవెక్కి ఏంటి

2. తాకి ఆలింగనంచేసుకున్న వసంతం – mutti thazhuvum ilavenil

తెల్లచర్మం తాకి ఆడుతున్న

ఉంగరాల తాటిజుట్టు

పూవువాసనా

నాగపామువాలేబుసకొడుతుంటే

మంత్రులయిన

నారెండుకళ్ళు

నువ్వుచూడగానే

పాడుతున్న నల్లపురుగులు

పడిపోతున్న అడుగువేలు

స్పర్శించినాగపువ్వు

తాకి ఆలింగనంచేసుకున్న వసంతం

చిరుపొద్దున

మొక్కజొన్న విరిసించడం
చూపుచుక్క
సంగమం

లతమొక్కచేదుగామారి
హీట్రేలుచేతిలో కలుపై
తర్లగాధర్మరుగీ
జలపాతాలు
పడేపక్షి
రెండుమృతదేహాలజైలు
మాయం

తెల్లరెక్కలేన్కో ని
పెద్దపర్వతపడేపక్షి
పీఠభూమిలో ఎగిరిఎగిరిపోవడం